



Radon.

**the second leading
cause of lung
cancer, is a
radioactive gas that
comes from the
natural breakdown
of uranium in soil
and rock and gets**

**into the air you breathe. It typically moves through
the ground and into your home through cracks and
other holes in the foundation where it can accumulate
to unsafe levels. Because it is odorless, colorless,
and tasteless, testing is the only way to know if you
and your family are at risk from radon. There are
simple ways to fix a problem if needed.**

**Because radon levels tend to vary from day to day
and season to season, a long-term test is more likely
to tell you your year-round average radon level. A
short-term test is the quickest way to screen your
home for a potential radon problem.**

RADON TIPS

☼ Pennsylvania law requires that persons performing radon services (testing, mitigation, and/or laboratory analysis) be certified by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Only the owner or occupier of the building may test for or mitigate radon without certification. For example, real estate agents, home inspectors or home buyers cannot perform radon testing unless certified to do so by the state. Homebuilders are exempt from certification when using measures to prevent radon contamination in newly constructed buildings.

To verify certification:

- ☼ *call DEP: in PA 800-23RADON; outside PA (717) 783-3594*
- ☼ *ask to see current DEP Identification (ID) card, or*
- ☼ *a copy of the current DEP certification certificate.*
- ☼ Although DEP utilizes some EPA Radon Measurement Proficiency Programs, EPA listing by itself does not constitute Pennsylvania certification.
- ☼ For free radon information including a list of DEP certified radon professionals, call 800-23RADON or (717) 783-3594. Technical personnel are also available to answer any radon questions.
- ☼ In most cases, the use of a system with pipes and a fan is used to reduce radon. It is called a “sub-slab depressurization system” and does not require major changes to your home. The cost generally ranges between \$500- \$2500, with an average of \$1000.
- ☼ DEP recommends testing the lowest livable area of the building and considers the basement to be the lowest livable area if it can be used as a living area without major structural change.
- ☼ DEP recommends testing two or more locations, including the lowest livable, if the house has separate structural zones such as a family room above a crawl space or on a slab-on-grade.

RADON SERVICE AGREEMENTS

Some relocation and real estate companies are utilizing an alternate way to take care of radon responsibility called radon service agreements. This involves shifting the responsibility for the radon testing and correction from the current homeowner to the radon service agreement company.

A service agreement involves transferring the cost of radon testing and possible radon mitigation repairs, for a fee ranging from \$400 - \$800, from the agreement holder (homeowner) to the radon service agreement company.

Some radon service agreements take care of the testing and mitigation prior to the homebuyers taking possession of the home. With others, after taking possession of the property, the homebuyer is sent a do-it-yourself radon kit normally including two long-term radon detectors, instructions and other informative material. The homebuyer is then responsible for deploying the detector(s) for a predetermined amount of time, normally 90 - 120 days, and returning it to the laboratory for analysis. If the radon measured in the home is at or above EPA's 4.0 pCi/1 guideline, the radon service company arranges for the radon level to be reduced.

RADON SERVICE AGREEMENT TIPS

Check these tips before you sign!

- Radon service agreements are not guarantees that radon is not present. Make sure you use the test kits and use them properly.
- Results of radon tests conducted as part of a radon service agreement may not be acceptable to future buyers.
- Duplicates, two tests taken at the same time in the same location, would increase confidence in the radon test results.
- In order to eliminate the risk of exposure to dangerous levels of radon during the long-term test period, EPA and DEP recommend an initial short-term (2-7 days) radon measurement be conducted prior to the long term test.
- Verify proof of DEP radon certification, of the laboratory analyzing the detector, and, if mitigation is needed, of the mitigator. Call 800-23RADON or (717) 783-3594 to be sure.
- Due to large fluctuations in radon levels from season to season, a yearlong (12 month) test is recommended. If a 12 month test is not possible, try to have at least half of the testing period be during the heating season.
- Check references of the service agreement companies carefully.
- Be certain the contract guarantees the radon level to be reduced to below 4.0 pCi/l on an annual average.
- Note the time period of the guarantee. Some are guaranteed for as long as the home is owned by the Agreement Holder.
- Check if the agreement is transferable to subsequent owners.

- Check if there is a monetary limit per house.
- Check for inclusion of retest after mitigation, if needed.
- Determine what happens if a future radon test measures levels at or above the 4.0 pCi/l guideline.

And, no matter what the contract is, always keep in mind:

- Take time to read and understand what you are signing. Pay attention to the fine print, which may contain important information. Be certain to understand exactly what you are getting, how much you will have to pay, and over what period of time.
- Be sure the contract contains the names and addresses of the business and salesperson.
- Be sure all verbal promises are included in writing in the contract.



<http://www.dep.state.pa.us>

**CALL 1-800-23RADON FOR INFORMATION
OR**



**THE OFFICE OF
ATTORNEY GENERAL
PUBLIC EDUCATION AND INFORMATION UNIT
(717) 772-0907**

**TOLL-FREE CONSUMER HOTLINE:
1-800-441-2555
<http://www.attorneygeneral.gov>**



Mike Fisher
Attorney General

**DON'T
IGNORE RADON**



**IT DOESN'T
IGNORE YOU**